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PHILIPPINES

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

THE PHILIPPINE ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE PROJECT PHASE 2 (EcoGov2)

BACKGROUND

The Philippines suffers from severe deforestation, declining fish production and overflowing trash. Over 100,000 ha of forests are lost every year and the country imports over \$50M worth of forest products annually. About 70% of coral reefs are destroyed – overfishing and destructive fishing practices threaten the country's food security. Less than 40% of solid waste is collected, the rest clogs rivers and streets. Almost 58 percent of all groundwater is contaminated and unfit for aquatic life. Only 7% of domestic effluents is managed.

TARGET RESULTS

USAID's EcoGov Project Phase 2 (EcoGov2), in collaboration with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), various leagues of local government units (LGUs), DENR/Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), is strengthening LGUs to respond to these challenges through localized but strategic actions that aim to:

- Reduce overfishing and the use of destructive fishing practices;
- Reduce illegal logging and conversion of natural forests; and
- Improve the management of solid wastes and wastewater.

EcoGov 2 builds on the gains of EcoGov 1 where 79 strategically located LGUs were provided technical assistance to enable them to plan and initially implement locally-financed environmental programs, while observing the principles of transparency, accountability and participatory decision making in all their transactions, including planning activities. In EcoGov 2 some 100 LGUs (including those under Phase I) shall receive technical assistance as they implement their programs and enforce national and local laws to address threats to the environment and food security.

USAID, through EcoGov, is helping local communities protect their forests and coastal resources, and improve their management of solid waste in order to help alleviate poverty and provide a secure future for all.

STRATEGIES

Promising strategies, practices and experience from EcoGov-assisted LGUs will be concurrently disseminated. This will allow neighboring LGUs that share common natural resources, like watersheds and coastal areas, to address interlocking concerns of resource management and law enforcement (as in the case of 4 Luzon LGUs in Baler Bay now implementing an inter-LGU fisheries management plan and 8 municipalities in Mindanao jointly protecting a portion of Illana Bay). LGUs opting to share the costs and benefits from common disposal sites for solid waste will be assisted.



EcoGov 2 focuses on helping individual and cluster LGUs define and enforce accountability for the management of coastal and fishery resources. It will link the issuance/renewal of licenses with performance. It will help local governments establish and operate networks of marine sanctuaries so that depleted fish populations can regenerate on a wider scale; and carry out "bantay dagat"

operations to minimize destructive fishing practices.

EcoGov will assist local governments reduce illegal logging and promote sustainable forest and forestlands management. Guided by locally developed forest land use plans, forests will be managed by a combination of community stewardship with individual property rights, joint venture and co-management, and private sector partnerships. These local plans aim to provide economic incentives for people to protect the remaining forests and to grow trees and harvest wood products legally. In general, where local communities have obtained legal rights to use the forests, they protected the forests from illegal loggers and forest fires. Recently, the municipality of Wao in Lanao del Sur allocated P455,000.00 from their municipal budget to place over 17,000 has. of forest lands under community-based management



EcoGov 2 will assist urbanizing LGUs implement solid waste management plans. These plans shift emphasis from the traditional collection and dumping of solid waste to public-private partnerships that intercept up to 80% of the waste, which is biodegradable and recyclable. Inter-LGU collaboration (as in the case of Metro Tagbilaran in Bohol,

Central Visayas and some LGUs in Mindanao) is highly encouraged to establish common disposal facilities that deal with residual waste and are sustained by user fees. EcoGov2 will likewise assist several LGUs develop their waste water pollution management programs, particularly in assessing, promoting, managing, and regulating waste water from public markets, slaughterhouses, and public hospitals. This will also involve reviewing and enacting ordinances to regulate waste water in existing and new residential areas and to attract private sector participation in establishing and operating waste water treatment facilities.

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